



## **Governor's Tourism Awards Gala**

**Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer**

**Thursday July 17, 2014, 6-8 p.m.**

**Downtown Phoenix Sheraton Hotel**

**Thank you, Sherry, and thank you all for the excellent first ... and lasting ... impression you continually give visitors who visit our great state.**

**You are our best ambassadors to those who look to move here, open a business – or just spend their money here. And tonight, we're going to recognize and honor some of the most creative and effective players in Arizona tourism.**

**It's no secret that your industry is central to Arizona's job creation efforts and continued economic recovery.**

**In fact, a report by our Office of Tourism released today showed that visitors spent nearly 20 Billion dollars this past year.**

**And that spending generated more than 163 thousand jobs – up nearly 1.4 percent since 2012.**

**After being slammed by the recession in 2009, tourism has shown stable, positive and continued growth ... and there is no better time to continue our mission to market our well-known Arizona hospitality and culture.**

**It's been an essential part of the Arizona Comeback.**

**Credit for that belongs to the hard-working men and women in the industry who know how to treat visitors to a grand hospitality experience ... and know how to run a business well.**

**I also want to recognize the Arizona Office of Tourism for its effective use of the 7 Million dollars allocated for marketing Arizona in the last state budget.**

**With that funding, I had asked the Agency to take Arizona's tourism message to a national audience, to develop effective campaigns for rural Arizona, and to explore marketing to countries like China and Brazil.**

**If you saw AOT's presentation this morning, you know that it accomplished those goals, and then some.**

**AOT was able to launch a new national campaign with highly successful results.**

**Arizona's Tourism effort seized an opportunity to be successful as well, like the newspaper photos that ran nationwide during last winter's "Polar Vortex" storms in the Northeast.**

**The best photo was of freezing Easterners huddling on an icy sidewalk. In the store window behind them was a huge "Visit Arizona" wall-scape – showing a relaxing sunbather in a swimming suit.**

**Timing is everything I suppose, but being proactive in marketing Arizona's strengths to such an audience continues to be a winning strategy, and in this case, that marketing plan paid off!**

**The new campaign reached 39 percent of its target audience.**

**Along with these great results, AOT's Marketing Co-operative program, which helps rural communities promote their own destinations, has more participants than ever.**

**As for international efforts, AOT's efforts in China and Brazil, along with new consumer advertising in Canada and Mexico, are further expanding Arizona's image as a vibrant, world-class travel destination.**

**And with the launch of our new tourism site -- "Visit Arizona.com" -- we'll build even stronger impressions and expand our marketability to travelers from all across the globe.**

**Indeed, the value of our tourism industry extends well beyond the pure economics.**

**Tourism helps our cultural and historic preservation.**

**It improves our own quality of life for Arizona families, and it provides our children wonderful learning and educational field trip opportunities.**

**So in the end, the hard work and effort by many tourism professionals in this room has played a critical role in keeping Arizona's prestige in place as a truly world-class and attractive destination to visit, or relocate.**

**Thanks to our efforts, Arizona is primed and prepared to show off that heritage and prestige as we again host the Super Bowl and NFL Pro Bowl game.**

**We have a great story to tell, and another wonderful opportunity to further attract people to the greatest state, in the greatest nation on earth.**

**And we will accomplish this because we are blessed with a professional hospitality industry with people who know how to welcome, pamper and delight our visitors – and leave them yearning to come back for more.**

**Today, some of those accomplishments will be honored, and I want to congratulate the winners in advance – you truly put a shine on Arizona.**

**I would like to give a special thanks to Sherry, Mark and the entire team at the Arizona Office of Tourism for the great work they do every day on behalf of the State of Arizona.**

**We know there is much more to be done as we continue the Arizona Comeback and building the Arizona Brand.**

**We must remain focused on new and innovative ways to market Arizona as a premier tourism destination.**

**This will take resources and resilience.**

**Together we can continue to build the tourism industry as an economic driver for our state!**

**Thank all of you here tonight for doing such a marvelous job representing Arizona and our tourism industry.**

**Enjoy your evening.**